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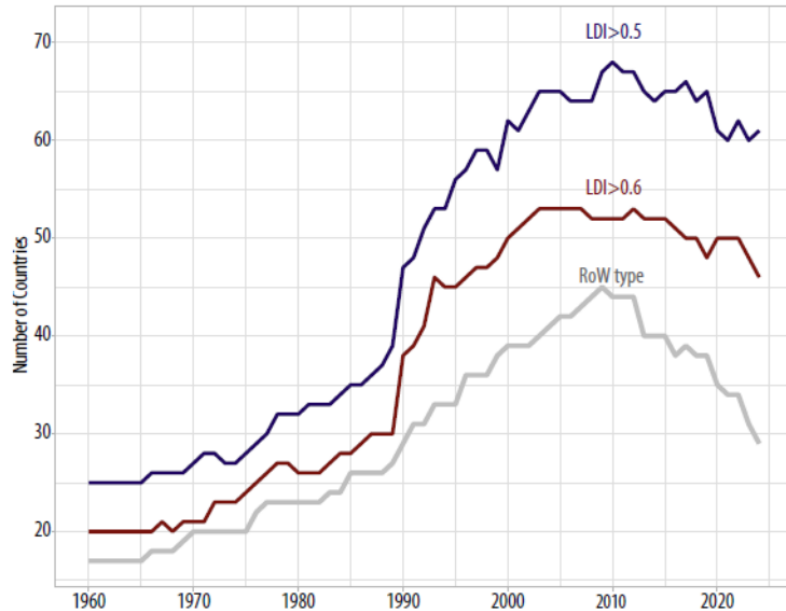
Demokratiske institusjoners motstandskraft: Byråkratiets betydning

Carl Henrik Knutsen, Professor, Institutt for statsvitenskap, UiO
Årskonferansen 2026, DFØ



Demokratisituasjonen globalt: Nedgangstider de siste ca 15 årene

FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF "LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES" FROM 2000-2024, FOR THREE DIFFERENT CATEGORIZATIONS.



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The Path to American Authoritarianism

*What Comes After
Democratic Breakdown*

STEVEN LEVITSKY
AND LUCAN A. WAY

March/April 2025
Published on February 11, 2025



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMANUEL POLANCO

Hva kjennetegner land med demokratisk tilbakegang de siste årene?

- Tilbakegang i veldig ulike land:
 - Fra høykvalitetsdemokrati til lavkvalitetsdemokrati
 - Fra demokrati til autoritært regime som fortsatt holder flerpartivalg
- I ulike verdensdeler, men mer tilbakegang i folkerike land
- I hovedsak valgte ledere som driver prosessene
- Gradvise prosesser, demokratiet bygges ned litt etter litt
- Ytringsfrihet, medier, sivilsamfunn, domstoler, lovstyre spesielt utsatt

Norge: Stabilt høykvalitetsdemokrati

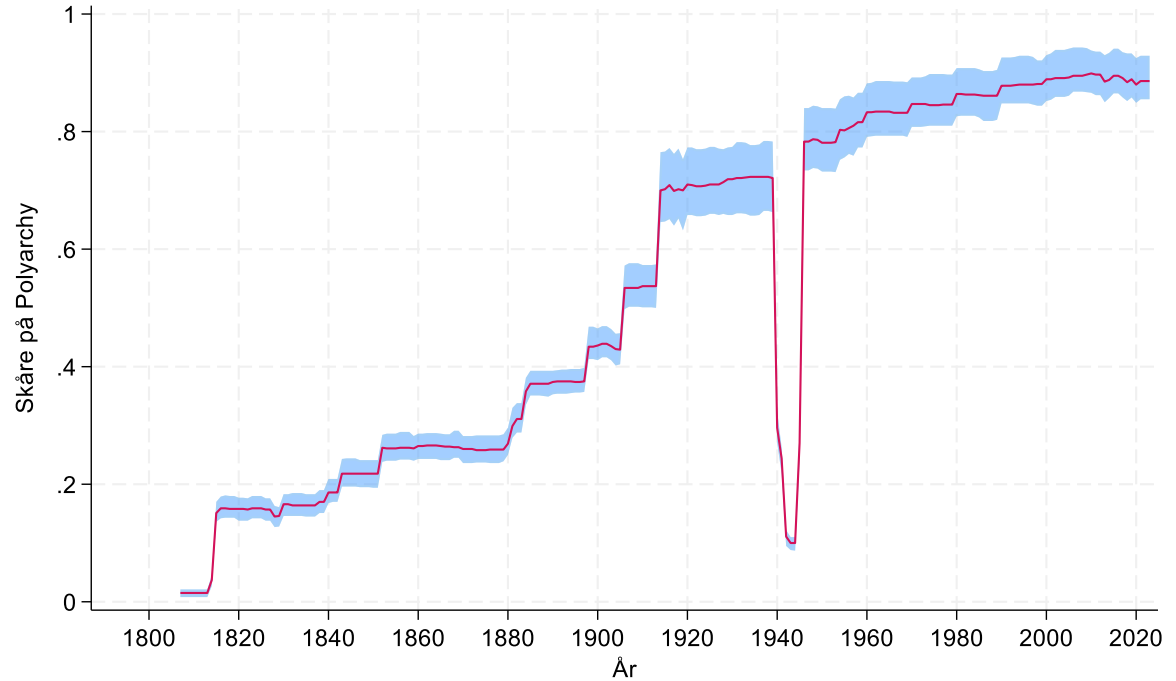
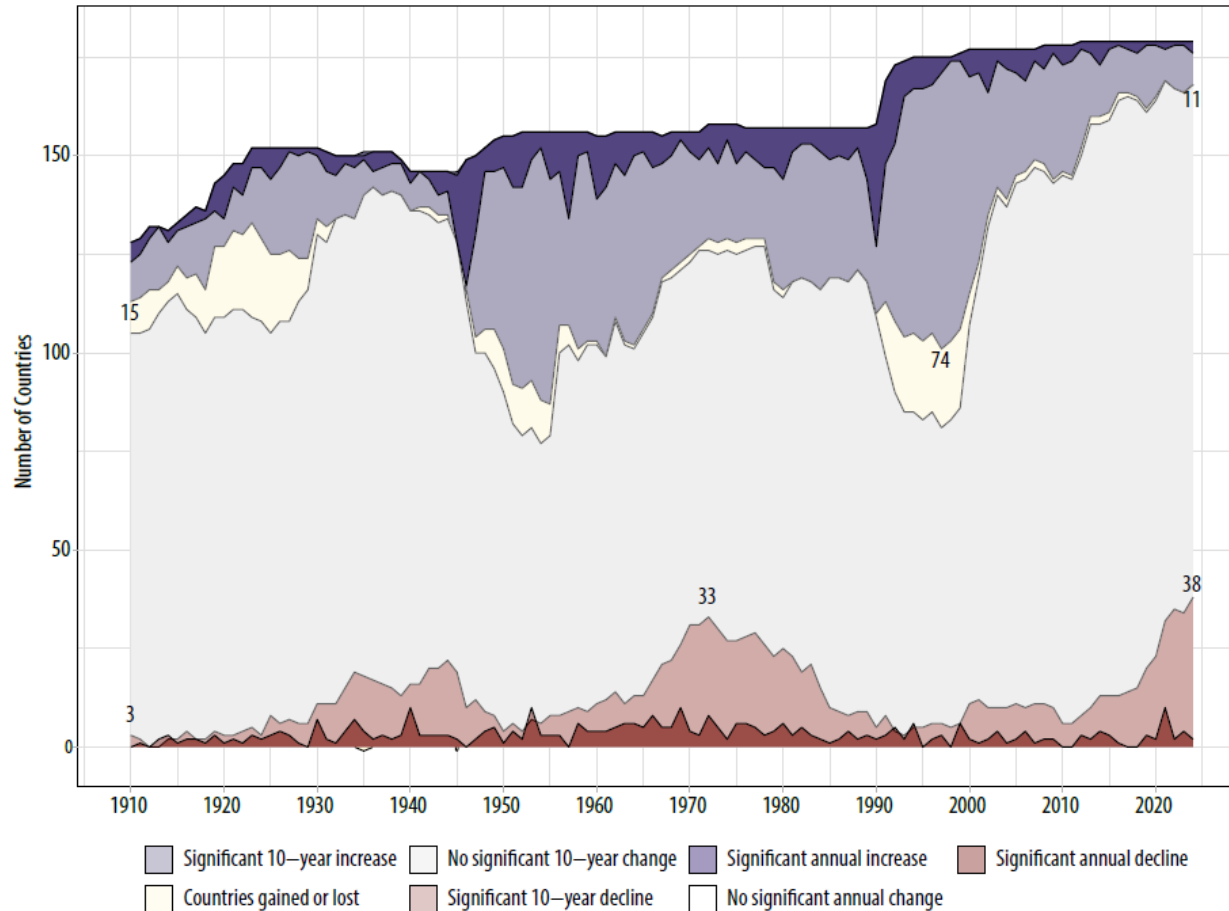


FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITH SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ON ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY INDEX OVER 1 OR 10 YEARS



The widths of the color bands represent the number of countries in each category. Categories reflect changes over 1 or 10 years that exceeded their country's 95% HPD confidence bounds.

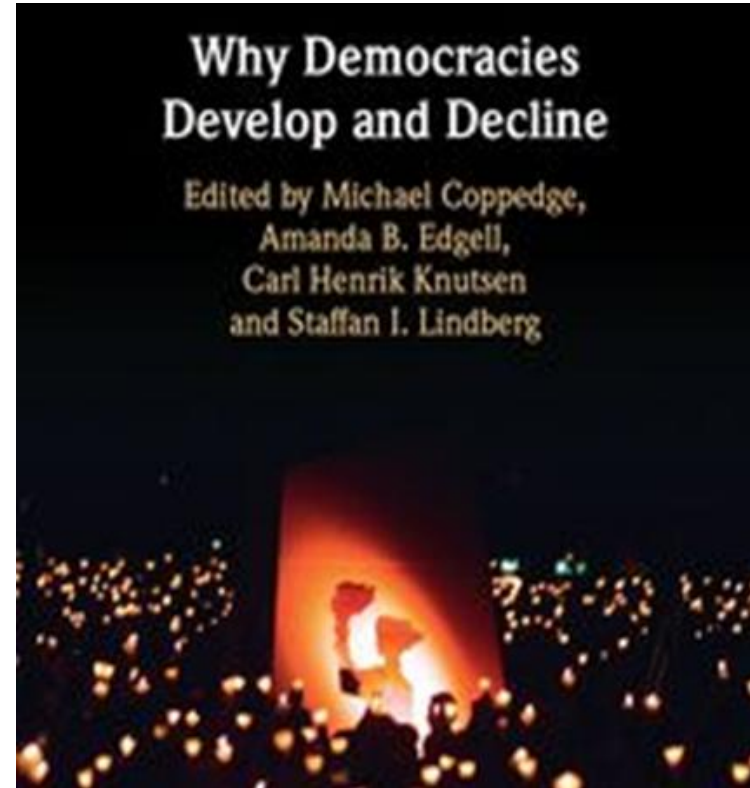
Demokratier er generelt hardføre systemer!

- Populært og legitimit
- Tolerabelt system også for eliter i opposisjon
- Maktbegrensninger gjør (selv-)kupp vanskelige
- Mekanismer for å kaste ledere uten å kaste systemet
- Produserer ofte relativt gode utfall (vekst, utdanning, helse, m.m.), som igjen er regimestabiliserende

Men noen demokratier er mer robuste enn andre

Årsaksfaktorer

- Internasjonale forhold
- Geografi og demografi
- Økonomi
- Sivilsamfunn
- **Det «beskyttende beltet»
av institusjoner**



Dimensions of State Capacity and Modes of Democratic Breakdown

Political Studies

1–26

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DOI: 10.1177/00323217251344758

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David Delfs Erbo Andersen¹ ,
Carl Henrik Knutsen² and Svend-Erik Skaaning¹

Abstract

Which dimensions of state capacity are most effective in safeguarding democracies from distinct modes of breakdown? This article theorizes and examines how two fundamental dimensions of state capacity—coercive and administrative—affect democratic stability differently depending on whether threats arise from incumbents or nonincumbents. Based on a global analysis covering democratic breakdowns from 1789 to 2020, we find that administrative capacity, characterized by meritocratic recruitment, impartial administration, and predictable enforcement, significantly reduces the risk of incumbent-led democratic breakdowns. In contrast, coercive capacity indicators, such as territorial control and military resources, do not robustly relate to either incumbent-led or nonincumbent-led breakdowns. Our study highlights the critical role of high-quality administrative institutions for democratic stability.

Keywords

democratic breakdown, state capacity, bureaucracy, incumbent takeovers

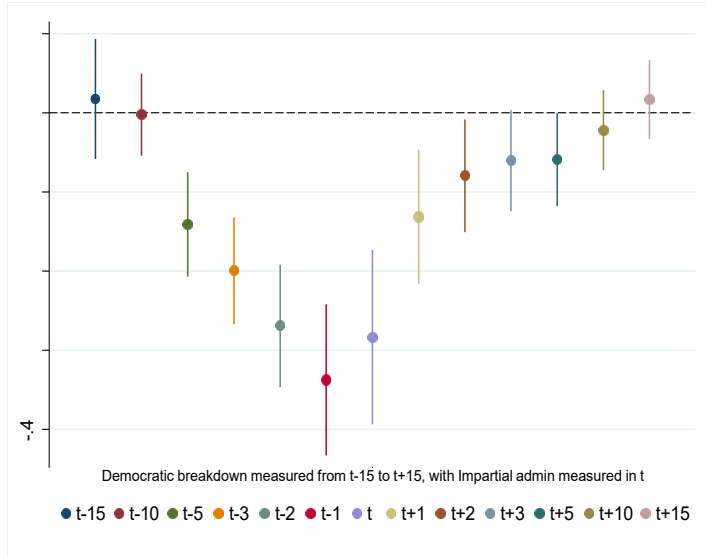


Figure A-6: Coefficients with 95% CIs for Impartial administration from versions of benchmark where outcome variable (democratic breakdown) measured from 15 years before ($t-15$) to 15 years after ($t+15$) the covariates.

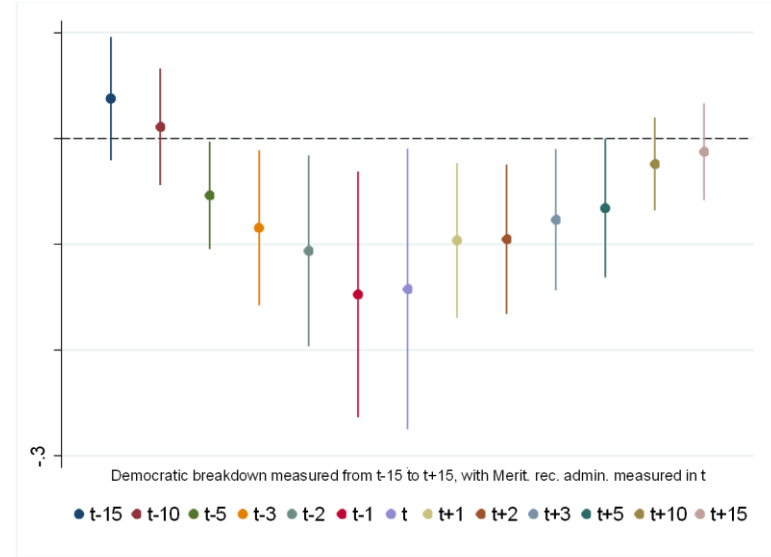


Figure A-4: Coefficients with 95% CIs for Meritocratic recruitment to bureaucracy from versions of benchmark where outcome variable (democratic breakdown) measured from 15 years before ($t-15$) to 15 years after ($t+15$) the covariates.

Hvordan byråkratiet endres

Politisk uavhengighet: Armlengdes avstand → tette bånd og kontroll

Rekruttering og opprykk: Meritokrati → Nepotisme og politisk lojalitet

Normer og adferd: Upartisk og regelfølgende → Partisk og diskresjonært

Forvaltning ressurser: Klar rolleforståelse → Korrupsjon og maktmisbruk

Hvorfor er byråkratiet så viktig for demokratiet?

- Fra nøytralt statsapparat til mektig politisk alliert
 - Kontroll over økonomiske ressurser
 - Kontroll over informasjon
 - Kontroll over politiske prosesser (inkl. valgavvikling)
 - *For My Friends, Anything; For My Enemies, the Law*
- Styrke egen makt, belønne allierte og straffe motstandere
- Fra frie og rettferdige til frie og urettferdige valg

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Julia Ornedo

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Since taking the helm of the Federal Communications Commission in January, Chairman Brendan Carr has launched investigations of nearly every major broadcast network.

John McDonnell/Getty Images

High Impact

Issues that are high impact and frequency should be prioritized



Gov. hiring, projects, handouts, etc. timed for election period

Opposition arrested by state security/police

Civil servants forced to aid campaign

High Frequency

Low Frequency

Judiciary intervenes in election results

Police harrass opposition supporters/disrupt rallies

State media advertises gov. achievements during campaign

Use of government cars in campaign rallies

Low Impact

Increasing registration fees to disadvantage opposition candidates

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